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The Newsletter of the Massachusetts Housing Partnership

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## MHP Recognizes Community Excellence in Affordable Housing

The Massachusetts Housing Partnership (MHP) broke new ground this summer by making its first public awards for "Community Excellence in Affordable Housing." The awards were presented to **Acton, Amherst, Barnstable, Boston and Gardner.**

This recognition was not easily earned. To be selected, the communities had to exceed four MHP standards: (1) achievement of a high proportion of affordable housing in their recent growth; (2) demonstration of a substantial commitment to special needs housing; (3) utilization of municipal land and resources to develop affordable housing; and, (4) linkage of their housing policies to growth management and to the preservation of open space. Only five out of sixteen cities and towns that applied met the rigorous standards required for recognition by MHP.

The Community Excellence Awards are the result of a new policy established by the MHP Board: recognition of a select number of cities and towns for outstanding contributions to affordable housing. These communities will receive special consideration for grant programs administered by MHP and the Executive Office of Communities and Development (EOCD). They will also receive special recommendations for grants from other state agencies.

Each of these award winners has a distinguished record of local initiatives to provide affordable housing. The Town of Acton has been a leader in negotiating to include an affordable housing component in private housing developments. Amherst has pioneered the development of mixed-income homeownership on town-owned land.

Barnstable has supported eight private, mixed-income housing developments in just the past three years. The City of Boston has done an outstanding job in making vacant and abandoned property available for affordable housing. And Gardner has actively supported single room occupancy (SRO) units and a range of other housing opportunities for those with very low incomes. One common characteristic of all five awardees is a strong commitment -- and proven track record -- in providing housing for the homeless, the mentally-ill, and other populations with special needs.

If your city or town would like to apply to MHP for a Community Excellence award, please contact the director of your MHP Regional Office or call MHP in Boston at (617) 727-7824.

## Second HOP Funding Round

Amy S. Anthony, Secretary of the Executive Office of Communities and Development has announced the opening of the second competitive funding round for the Homeownership Opportunity Program (HOP).

Revised guidelines and application forms for this round were released in September, and applications are due on December 6, 1988. Approximately \$6 million in HOP funds will be available for projects selected in the competition.

HOP encourages communities and developers to work together to produce affordable homes for first-time buyers. Over 6,000 units, including 1,800 which are affordable to low and moderate income households, are in the HOP pipeline. Forty HOP projects are occupied or in construction, and 75 additional projects are in development.

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## Governor Dukakis Visits New HOP Development in Andover



*Governor Dukakis paid a visit to the newly-completed Abbott's Pond HOP development on August 22. Shown with the governor are prospective first-time homebuyers and MHP Director Joseph Flatley.*

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# Our Town: Building Our Future Together

## MHP's Third Annual Conference and Expo

More than 50 communities showcased their housing activities along streets named Commonwealth Road and Pilgrim's Path. Others, along with housing advocates and planning organizations, offered advice and information in the Town Hall on Main Street. Governor Dukakis brought members of the National Housing Task Force to witness the level of housing activity in Massachusetts. The occasion? The third annual Massachusetts Housing Partnership Conference and Exposition, which took place on June 28 at the Bayside Exposition Center in Boston.

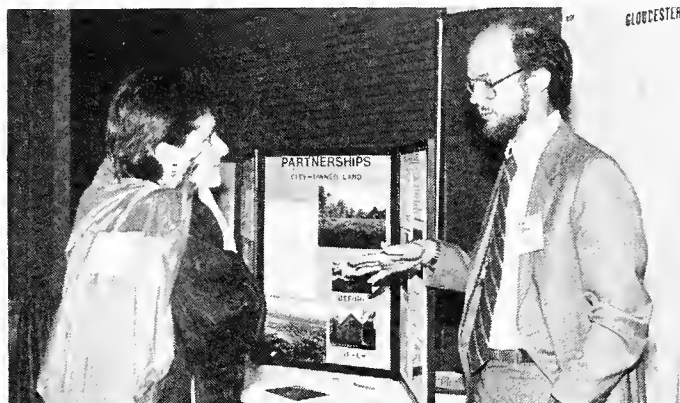
Over 1,000 people participated in the day-long event, including national housing policy makers such as Senator Alan Cranston of California and Detroit Mayor Coleman Young. Lieutenant Governor Evelyn Murphy addressed the gathering, and Massachusetts Congressmen Barney

Frank and Joseph Kennedy also participated. Particular highlights were a speech by Governor Dukakis on national housing policy in which he called for the formation of a National Partnership for Affordable Housing, and a keynote address by James W. Rouse, president of the Enterprise Foundation and chairman of the National Housing Task Force. Morning and afternoon workshop sessions and opportunities to visit the booths in the exposition hall rounded out the day's activities.

MHP Director Joseph Flatley expressed his pleasure at the success of this year's Expo. "We are gratified by the tremendous increase in local housing activity throughout the state during the past three years," he commented. "We at MHP share the pride of the communities which displayed their housing efforts at the Expo."



*In his speech to the Expo participants, Governor Dukakis said, "The American dream means many things to many people. But all agree that good housing at a cost the average American family can afford is an essential part of the promise of America."*



*Jim Haskell of the City of Gloucester describes the city's partnership activities to a visitor to Gloucester's Expo booth.*



*Senator Alan Cranston and keynote speaker James Rouse tour the exhibition hall.*



*Wall Street, the exposition's Financial District, proved to be a popular destination for visitors needing information about financial resources.*

## HOMeward

A publication of the Massachusetts Housing Partnership

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**Michael S. Dukakis**, Governor

**Amy S. Anthony**, Co-Chair  
Secretary, Executive Office of  
Communities and Development

**John F. Bok**, Co-Chair  
Partner, Csaplar and Bok

**Joseph L. Flatley**, Director

# **Partnership Profile: Barnstable Recognized for Community Excellence in Providing Affordable Housing**

The Town of Barnstable has experienced tremendous growth and change over the last ten years, making it one of the fastest growing communities in Massachusetts. In the past three years, Barnstable has issued over 2,000 building permits for new residential construction.

In an effort to manage this unprecedented growth, Barnstable initiated a comprehensive planning effort to address issues such as solid waste disposal, environmental protection, traffic, and increased municipal services.

Due to the extraordinary efforts of Barnstable's local housing partnership, known as the Cape Community Housing Trust, the development of affordable housing is an important part of that comprehensive planning effort. As Joseph Polcaro, C.C.H.T. president, noted, "Although we face real environmental challenges, they are not insurmountable. Through the commitment of Trust members and town officials, Barnstable has proven that housing and environmental concerns can be addressed together."

While some communities facing this level of growth have put the development of affordable housing aside, Barnstable has been so successful that they recently received MHP's Community Excellence Award for their affordable housing efforts.

The non-profit Cape Community Housing Trust was formed in 1985 by a group of dedicated community advocates and interested residents who became increasingly alarmed at the impact of escalating real estate values and exclusionary zoning practices on the town's low and moderate income population. Because of the Trust's commitment and success, the Barnstable Board of Selectmen designated it as the town's Local Housing Partnership.

The Trust began by drafting development standards, incorporating the town's planning goals and objectives, to properly evaluate development proposals. Their public education efforts led to the inclusion of affordable housing development in the town's official Master Plan.

Since then, the town has revised its official policy for disposition of tax title lands, allowing for affordable

housing development, adopted a cluster zoning by-law, provided administrative funding for the Cape Community Housing Trust, and transferred the title of several parcels of land to the housing authority for public housing as well as a parcel to the Trust, for its own 18-unit affordable housing development. The town has also completed a comprehensive housing plan which includes numerical goals and a development timetable.

Through the C.C.H.T.'s efforts, four developments totalling 275 units have been funded under the Homeownership Opportunity Program (HOP), and the Trust is planning its own HOP development.

The Trust also has been instrumental in advocating a balanced housing agenda in Barnstable. C.C.H.T. member Patricia Pap explained that it is "essential that

local communities understand that the private sector does not meet the housing needs of many of our residents." In the past two years, the town has supported the development of 32 units of elderly and 52 units of special needs housing, two homeless shelters, and 145 units of state-funded rental housing.

Barnstable provides the clearest example of a community which, while facing extraordinary growth, has taken its responsibility to provide housing opportunities for all its residents seriously. Its formula for success includes real commitment on the part of local officials, the hard work and dedication of the Cape Community Housing Trust, and a determination to overcome significant barriers in achieving its goals.

It's a formula which has made Barnstable a statewide model for the development of affordable housing.

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## **Documents Now Available from MHP**

MHP now has a number of reports and other informational products available which could be very useful to communities and to local housing partnership members.

Unless otherwise noted, documents are available from MHP, at (617) 727-7824.

### **Challenge Grant Products**

**"Part of the Solution"** is a 45-minute videotape produced by the Ecumenical Social Action Committee, which documents a variety of ways in which older homeowners and younger home-seekers come together to maintain and find affordable housing.

**Contact:** Ecumenical Social Action Committee, 3134 Washington Street, P.O. Box 4, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130 (617) 524-2555

**"The Affordable Housing Challenge: Case Studies of Selected Developments"** is a manual prepared by the Housing Committee of the Boston Society of Architects which presents case studies of successfully designed affordable housing.

**"Taking Action"** is a manual written by the Women's Institute for Housing and Economic Development which provides technical assistance to groups wishing to develop housing and services for low-income women and children.

**"Financing Energy Management in Affordable Housing, a Guide for Massachusetts Developers" and "Rehab Housing Demonstration Projects"**, two reports produced by Applied Resources Group on ways in which energy improvements can be financed to minimize the expenses of developers and residents.

**"Development of a Limited Equity Housing Cooperative with On-Site Child Care"** is a manual produced by the Town of Amherst and the Amherst Housing Authority which provides information on construction of limited equity cooperative housing with child care.

**"The Cooperative Mobile Home Park Manual"** assists residents of mobile home parks with the purchase of their parks and establishment of a cooperative form of ownership.

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## *Documents Available, continued*

### **“Orleans Housing Needs Research: Discussion of Findings” and “A Survey Model for Massachusetts Towns”.**

Published in two volumes, this report details survey methods for use in other towns and presents the results of a housing needs survey in Orleans.

**“Feasibility Study on Equity Sharing”** is a report produced by the Town of Lexington describing a model program to address displacement caused by condominium conversion.

### **Resource File**

MHP has compiled a resource file consisting of sample reports representative of 11 different categories of documents. The categories include Development Guidelines and Evaluation Criteria, Requests for Proposals, Housing Needs Analyses, Buyer Selection and Application Packets, Strategies for Affordable Housing, and Zoning Incentives for Affordable Housing.

The sample documents are not intended to represent actions which MHP recommends to all communities; rather, they are meant to provide communities with models to use as references.

### **Consultant List**

MHP staff has produced a list of consultants who provide services in housing and other related fields. The list is not intended as an endorsement from MHP, rather, it is intended for informational purposes, to simplify the process of hiring a consultant for a municipality or a local partnership.

## *HOP Round, cont.*

Workshops for developers and local officials will be held according to the schedule listed below in **Upcoming Events**.

In addition, MHP and MHFA staff will be available at question-and-answer sessions in Boston on October 28 and November 22, and on November 10 in Framingham.

## **Upcoming Events**

**Creating Affordable Housing in Massachusetts: A Conference on State Housing Resources. Half-day morning sessions on Affordable Homeownership, Rental, Cooperative, and Special Needs Housing. Optional afternoon pre-proposal question and answer workshops to review application procedures and program guidelines.**

October 11      **Boston.** Westin Hotel, Copley Place

October 14      **Framingham,** Sheraton Tara, Exit 12 off Mass. Turnpike

October 17      **Northampton.** Hilton Hotel, Junction of Routes 91 and 5

**Training sessions for certifying agents for HOP developments in Boston.**

mid-October      **Boston,** Mass. Housing Finance Agency, 50 Milk Street

**Fall Conference for Central Massachusetts Housing Partnership members. Morning workshops on topics including Mission/Goals of Housing Partnerships, Comprehensive Permit Application, and Building Consensus in the Community. Registration limited to 150.**

October 22      **Worcester.** Trinity Lutheran Church



**Massachusetts  
Housing Partnership**

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